

# FoodSHIELD

## User Vetting Process & Procedure

### FoodSHIELD Administration

# Background: FoodSHIELD

FoodSHIELD is a web-based platform designed to create community between the various laboratories and regulatory agencies that make up our nation's food and agricultural sectors. Through secure, integrated resources such as detailed agency profiles, departments of agriculture and health, as well as laboratories, have the ability to communicate and coordinate with their peers in other states.

## Who are FoodSHIELD Members?

FoodSHIELD is being designed initially to include participants from local, state, and federal regulatory agencies, and laboratories that perform analyses related to all stages of the food supply, as well as clinical laboratories that respond to outbreaks and food safety concerns. These governmental participants have additional access to secure portions of the site. The secure portion of the site contains information about laboratories and detailed contact databases.

Individuals who are not government officials, including industry representatives, can also participate in FoodSHIELD if they are part of a workgroup initiated by a government member. These individuals' access is limited to the workgroup materials, meetings, and documents.

## Key Terms & Definitions

**Applicant:** An individual who has requested access to be a FoodSHIELD member

**Coordinator:** Individual, who is the point of contact for the applicant, who verifies through e-mail or phone applicant's current employment status

**Portal Member:** Individual, who has full access to FoodSHIELD.

**Contact:** Individual, who has no login rights, but contact information, is displayed in FoodSHIELD

**Work group Participant:** Individual, who has guest membership to a work group, but does not qualify as a full portal member

## Validation Procedure

Below is the procedure for validating and vetting applicants for FoodSHIELD access.

1. Applicant requests access to FoodSHIELD by contacting Coordinator. The Applicant shall provide his/her name, affiliation, contact phone number, and e-mail address to the Coordinator.
2. The Coordinator will send the Applicant a FoodSHIELD Membership Form, if the Applicant's agency is present in AgencyDIR. If the Applicant's Agency is not in AgencyDIR, the Applicant will be requested to fill out the Agency Form.

3. Upon receipt of the Membership form or Agency Form, the Coordinator will judge whether or not the Applicant is a candidate for Full Portal Membership or Contact in FoodSHIELD. <sup>1</sup>
4. Coordinator will verify through phone or e-mail the Applicant's position and approves or denies membership
5. Applicant will receive Welcome e-mail and terms of service. Applicant will agree to Terms of Service and login to FoodSHIELD.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### Coordinator

- Is point of contact for all Applicants
- Verifies and Validates Applicant's information provided on the FoodSHIELD Membership form
- Creates membership accounts
- Reviews existing member status through pinging procedure for continued access and membership

## **Membership Approval Criteria**

The vetting criteria for FoodSHIELD Members are listed below.

### FoodSHIELD Member

- Verifiable that Applicant exists.
- Applicant must comply with all terms and conditions of the FoodSHIELD Terms of Service and provide required information requested and contained in the FoodSHIELD Membership Form
- If the Applicant is a government representative, he/she must be employed by a government agency (Federal, State, County, or Tribal) or an agency/organization that represents the food and agricultural sector
- If the Applicant is a private sector representative, he/she will receive a guest membership or contact status ONLY. Applicants, who are employed by the Food Industry, may apply for membership to IndustryDIR following the same membership process. The Applicant must be employed by a food and/ or agriculture related organization to be considered for guest membership.

Application of the Membership Approval Criteria will be applied by the Coordinator and supervised by the Steering Committee Members.

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<sup>1</sup> Those wishing to be a member of a work group can access the group by being given a guest membership. Vetting of work group guest members is the job of the work group administrator. Any guest member wishing to obtain a full FoodSHIELD membership must go the process being explained here.

### **Suspension of FoodSHIELD Access**

FoodSHIELD members who no longer meet the Membership Approval Criteria listed above are subject to having their access to FoodSHIELD suspended. In addition, if Applicant does not respond to initial “Welcome e-mail”, yearly pinging procedure, or violates Terms of Service Agreement membership will be suspended. All members are subject to a yearly review process that will be completed by “pinging”. Members will be responsible for responding to the ping by logging in and updating their member profile.

### **Additional Sharing Platform Access**

FoodSHIELD members should have the ability to transition from the FoodSHIELD system to additional web platforms such as: HISIN-FA and Infra-gard (Ag-gard) sites through a single password entry point. These additional web-platforms provide food and agriculture sector members with the additional tools needed for communicating, coordinating, collaborating, educating, and training within the sector.